



National Galleries Scotland

Retrospective Documentation Policy

Version/Date

Senior Management Team: Collections approved this policy: 12th February 2014

Principles

NGS has a continuous process of improving incomplete, missing or inadequate records, and of producing new information on our collections to ensure that the information provided for our audiences is accurate, complete and up to date.

This ensures that all NGS collections are catalogued, that we know the identity and location of all objects for which we are responsible, and that the quality of cataloguing complies with established UK standards of collections management.

NGS is committed to eliminating all cataloguing backlogs within a planned and published (Corporate Plan) timeframe.

Definitions

Retrospective documentation: The addition of new information to existing object or collection records.

Legislation and ethics

Retrospective documentation provides essential evidence required for due diligence, for audit and accountability, and for accessibility.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- National Heritage Act 1980: Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- Part 6, Section 136 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums 2008
- Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries, Third edition 2002
- ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2013

Standards

This policy is part of the Collections Management set of policies that form a requirement of PAS197 and Spectrum as part of the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme.

Control measures

NGS manages retrospective documentation as part of an ongoing plan to reduce and eliminate backlogs; or as a result of audits; or when we discover incomplete details, an anomaly, inconsistency or mis-match of records; or as part of a record conversion or systems upgrade.



All new information must be substantiated before we add it to the object record.

We hold all object records centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons can update object records.

When we acquire, accession and catalogue new objects we aim to record at least the core details for each object, and subsequently to record promptly changes and updates such as location or extended catalogue information, in order to reduce the need for retrospective documentation.

Related policies

The following are related NGS policies:

- Object Entry and Pre-Entry Policy
- Acquisition Policy
- Inventory Control Policy
- Cataloguing Policy
- Location and Movement Control Policy
- Rights and Reproduction Management Policy
- Valuation Control Policy
- Physical Audit Policy
- Record Audit Policy
- Object Exit and Despatch Policy
- Due Diligence Policy